

# **CITY OF TEMPE PARKS AND RECREATION LADYHAWKS SOFTBALL PROGRAM**

## **GENERAL OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR ALL DIVISIONS/PROGRAMS**

### **OBJECTIVES AND PHILOSOPHY:**

The objectives of the Fast Pitch Softball program are for all players:

1. To participate in all games
2. To display good sportsmanship
3. To experience friendly competition
4. To have fun while participating
5. To develop both offensive and defensive skills
6. To promote academics

The LadyHawks Softball Program philosophy is to provide a program that will enable every player the opportunity to participate. In general, this league is an opportunity for girls to have a more competitive experience in the game of softball, but also they must have the opportunity to play and improve their softball skills so they may continue to play at higher levels.

As a coach you have as great an influence as the participants and their parents. You can strengthen the league and serve your players best by putting aside the attitude of “winning at all costs” and emphasize, participation, skill development, confidence, sportsmanship, friendly competition and fun.

### **COACHES**

Each and every volunteer coach working within Parks and Recreation programs are required to go through the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) training. This training involves coaching philosophy, building self-esteem and confidence, teaching sportsmanship, conditioning, safety, injuries, and coaching tips. It requires that all coaches be drug, alcohol and tobacco free, while at all youth sporting events. The NYSCA certified coach is required to sign a Code of Ethics pledge to keep sports safe, fun, and a positive experience for Tempe’s youth.

Tempe Parks and Recreation will conduct a background check on all volunteer coaches. This process will include fingerprinting for every volunteer.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

All participants and coaches are required to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. Profanity will not be tolerated. A good attitude and respect for the other teams, as well as, Parks and Recreation staff will enhance the enjoyment of the program. See Sports Code of Ethics

### **NYSCA COACHES’ CODE OF ETHICS PLEDGE**

I hereby pledge to live up to my certification as an NYSCA Coach by following the NYSCA Coaches’ Code of Ethics.

- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development from the same age group.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.

## **NYSCA COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS PLEDGE (continued)**

- I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not the adults.

## **COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Must complete the NYSCA training prior to practicing with their team.
- Hold a team meeting with the parents explaining the program rules and philosophy.
- Attend all games, arriving at least 20 minutes prior to the start of the games OR practices.

## **CONDUCT FOR COACHES, PARENTS, SPECTATORS**

- Any coach, paid or volunteer, any PARENT, or any SPECTATOR, must remove themselves from the playing area if asked to do so by any staff member. Anyone "ejected" from the practice or game playing area cannot return to the field without meeting with the Recreation Coordinator, or other league administrator.
- Use of tobacco (in any form) and/or alcohol in the presence of players at *practice* or *games* is prohibited.
- Display appropriate behavior at all times is expected from every coach, parent and spectator. Good role modeling will encourage all players to display good sportsmanship.
- After the game each team is REQUIRED to give a cheer for the opposition and give congratulation in the form of a handshake.
- A coach is responsible for the action of their players and team followers.
- Profanity by coaches, participants or spectators is not allowed.
- Coaches are not to conduct fundraisers, solicit sponsors or provide players with monetary awards.

## **TWO DEEP LEADERSHIP**

To ensure that the coaching experience is positive and safe for the coach and players, Tempe Parks and Recreation INSISTS ON **"two deep leadership"** at all practices or team gatherings. This means two adults in attendance at all times.

To accomplish Two Deep Leadership we suggest:

- Find an assistant coach and have that coach at each practice.
- Nominate a "Team Parent" and have him or her assign adult parents to be at each practice.
- Call another coach in your league and hold dual practices.
- Coaches are not allowed to plan social events for individual players or the entire team.

Tempe Parks and Recreation requires coaches always to have at least two adults present at all practices and/or games. **If "two deep leadership" can not be achieved, practice MUST be canceled** and notify the parents. When canceling or ending practice early, make sure not to leave players unattended. If practice ends and a parent hasn't pick-up one of the players, a coach, or parent must wait until all players have a ride and are accounted for. **DO NOT ABANDON THE PLAYERS, and do not transport players unless specifically directed, in writing, by the parent. You assume complete responsibility for the player if you decide to transport any player.**

## **TRANSPORTATION OF PLAYERS**

Players are responsible for their own transportation to and from games and practice. Paid staff are prohibited from transporting any players unless that player is their own child. Coaches, volunteer or staff, should not transport players. If volunteer coaches do transport players, they do so at their own risk. **If for some reason, a volunteer coach must transport a player, you must received written permission from the parent(s) and you must have another adult with you (two deep leadership must be in place at all times when in the company of any player).**

## **DISCIPLINE OF PLAYERS**

**All disciplinary action taken by a coach must first be discussed with the Recreation Coordinator and the players' parents.**

Coaches are required to be fair and consistent with discipline. Inform players and the parents about what is expected of them. Disciplining a player should not be used as an easy excuse to withhold a player from game competition, unless you have spoken to the Recreation Coordinator and informed the parents prior to any game situation.. Be sure there is ample reason when "benching" a player due to "disciplinary" reasons.

A player may be disciplined for the following reasons ONLY:

- Missing practices or game without notification
- Being constantly late.
- Physical assault.
- Constant use of foul language.
- Continued inappropriate behavior such as bad sportsmanship.

DO NOT use extra running or physical activity as a disciplinary measure.

## **DROPPING OF PLAYERS**

**Only the Recreation Coordinator, for the following reasons may drop a player from the team roster: These guidelines are NOT inclusive, and removal of a player will be reviewed on an individual bases, depending upon the violation.**

- Missing more than two weeks while on vacation or sick, without notifying coach or staff.
- Missing three consecutive practices without an excuse.
- Constant unsportsman- like behavior.

What a coach are required to do before dropping a player:

- Talk to parents.
- Talk with the Recreation Coordinator.
- Let the parents and Recreation Coordinator help out with problem.

## **PLAYERS:**

It is the responsibility of the player to be ready for practice or games. Players should come to each meeting HYDRATED, dressed in clothing suitable for activity, including proper shoes, (no flip flops, sandals or open toed shoes will be allowed), have an appropriate sized glove, and wear a hat.

All players should drink plenty of water BEFORE PRACTICE. Practice or game time is not the time to begin drinking water. It is important for players to bring enough water to last through an hour and ½ of activity, but more importantly, players should be well hydrated BEFORE coming to the practice field. Coaches will allow numerous water breaks through out the meeting time.

Sunscreen should be applied before the meeting time. It is the responsibility of the player to have this done prior to coming to practice.

## **PLAYERS BILL OF RIGHTS**

1. The LadyHawks Softball Program is for the players. It is not for administrators, coaches, or parents. The welfare of all players will be the number one consideration.
2. Each player has the right to play in **at least half** of every game, no matter what the degree of physical ability or the relative importance of the game in terms of competition.
3. Each player has the right to have a coach who places them first, the team second, himself/herself third, and winning fourth.
4. Each player has the right to have fun participating and to have a supportive coach who takes the time to work with each athlete, regardless of ability or potential.
5. Each player has the right to have fun participating whether he/she plays on a winning or losing team.
6. **As a parent, if you feel that your child's rights are being violated, please contact a LadyHawks Youth Softball staff member.**

## **TEAM ASSIGNMENTS:**

For the first three meetings, all players will be involved in “station based” training. There will be six pre-designed stations for players to experience. All coaches and volunteers will be asked to evaluate the players as they make their way through the stations. On the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) meeting, players will be assigned to a team, given a team shirt, hat and socks, and from that point on, the player will be ask to wear their team shirt and practice with their team. If for some reason, players that want to play together are separated, LadyHawks’ staff will try to accommodate the request.

Teams will be assigned a maximum of 12 players. On many occasions, especially in the Coach Pitch and T-ball Divisions, teams may be comprised of 10 players. At the younger ages, “less is more”, with less players, there will be more opportunities for the players, and because score is not kept in the lower age divisions, and play is usually limited to the infield, we recommend no more than 10 players for the lower divisions.

## **Specific to the MINORS Division;**

It is the goal of the LadyHawks program to have friends play on the same team, HOWEVER, in order to insure that the teams are as equal in skill level as possible, players will be assigned a specific team. When skill level is not a factor, i.e. both players do not skew the overall skill level of a team, players will be able to play on the same team. If however, two players must be separated, the Minors Division is set up that all teams will be playing on the same night, on either of two fields located right next to each other, so if players need to share transportation, there will not be a conflict. LadyHawks administrators realize that playing with friends is a goal of many players, and every attempt will be made to allow friends to play together, but there may be an occasion for players to be separated. Please be positive about the experience if your child is requested to “split” from another player. The reaction of the parents’ play an important part in having a positive attitude for the player.

**ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS: Age as of July 31, 2005** All players 9 years old and older, are required to have a copy of a child’s birth certificate on file.

It is the responsibility of the coach to check the birthdates of all players, regardless if the player was assigned by the Parks & Recreation staff, or recruited by the coach. Coaches will be held accountable for any players that are found to be ineligible because of age. *General grade guidelines are as follows, however, the age of a player is most important factor when deciding eligibility.*

<b>Minors Division:</b>	<b>Grades 4, 5, &amp; 6</b>
<b>Coach Pitch Division:</b>	<b>Grades 2 &amp; 3</b>
<b>T-Ball Division:</b>	<b>Grades K-1</b>

## **ACCIDENTS:**

**The City of Tempe DOES NOT provide medical insurance.  
Each family is responsible for their own medical insurance.**

If a player is injured, in a practice or a game, a City of Tempe Accident Report will be filled out and turned into the Parks & Recreation office as soon as possible. Before each game and/or practice, locate a phone to use in case of emergency.

Never hesitate to call for medical help.

## **PARENTS:**

It is the responsibility of the parents to have your child prepared for practice or games. If your child will miss a practice or game, please notify the coach.

## **WHAT TO DO IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?**

In the event any player or family member does not feel like they are receiving a positive softball experience, please notify the coach as soon as possible. If you do not feel comfortable about approaching the coach, please notify the Recreation Coordinator as soon as possible, but **DO NOT EXPRESS YOUR CONCERNS DURING PRACTICE OR GAME TIME, OR IN FRONT OF PARTICIPANTS OR CHILDREN.**

The LadyHawks administrators are committed to providing a safe, positive softball experience for all children, however, occasionally problems may arise. If this is the case, parents or guardians are required to wait until after practice to meet and confer with a coach, or to notify a league administrator as soon as possible. If a parent does not feel like approaching a coach, please notify the Recreation Coordinator either;

by phone: 480-350-5267, via email at: [bobbi\\_jones@tempe.gov](mailto:bobbi_jones@tempe.gov).

**SCHEDULES:**

Each team will play meet twice a week for 8 weeks (once a week for Sat. a.m. T-ball).

The season begins: March 28/29, 2005. The last week of the program is the week ending May 21, 2005. If for any reason, a player can not make a practice or game time, please notify the coach, the Recreation Coordinator (Bobbi: 480-350-5267) or Program Coordinator (Jarrod: 480-350-5207)

IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER: call the Field Sports Hotline: 480-350-5293 for up to date information concerning field conditions. Since field conditions vary drastically, make sure you listen for field conditions SPECIFICALLY FOR BENEDICT fields. In the event that a game or practice is canceled.